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phrases, all of which are open to condemnation, on like grounds of senselessness to this I have quoted; I leave to the devotional feeling, to the poetical perception, to the common sense of every unprejudiced thinker to consider the utter unfitness to the signification of the words, of these apparently accidental musical outbursts, and I am certain that all will recognise the grossly false declamation which even so inconsiderable an observer as myself cannot avoid noticing. Let one technical comment have space among these æsthetical remarks; the harmony employed for the phrases in question, however attractive, however good of its kind, and I freely own its merit and its effective vocal distribution, is so essentially modern in character, is so totally distinct in style from what succeeds to it, that its insertion in the place where it occurs sounds as a pane of newly-stained glass will look, if introduced, with all the gaudy gaiety of its fresh colouring, in the midst of an antique painted window whose hues had been mellowed by centuries.

As to the undesirability, upon artistic, upon historical, and upon ecclesiological views, of restoring the so-called Gregorian musical system to standard use in the English Church, much may be added to what has often been urged, and this may be again and again repeated with ever-growing urgency, until the well-intentioned men who pursue this object be convinced of its fallacy. There is a total difference, however, between reproducing what has been lost for ages and correcting inaccuracies that obscure what has been professedly in constant use—between resuscitating what has been buried in the oblivion of centuries, and purifying that which, though unnoticed and even ignored, has ever been supposed to continue in practice, from the mouldy fungi that have crusted about it. Many persons have supposed the music to be the entire composition of Tallis, knowing nothing of Barnard's alteration, which is habitually sung to the Preces, Versicles, and Litany; many have supposed the soprano part we are accustomed to hear to be the Plain Song upon which Tallis constructed his counterpoint; many have not concerned themselves with any supposition on the subject, nor given to this any heed whatever, but all feel in the music appropriated to these portions of the Service a something distinct from the thoughts of our common life, all recognise in it what they have ever heard in the same situation, and all yield to the sense of reverence with which, because of its strangeness of character and of their lifelong familiarity with this music in these places, it fails not to impress them.

It would then be well to respect to the utmost this sense of reverence, nay, to enhance it, by fully correcting the means by which it is prompted. The Service of Tallis, as originally published, is to be obtained in modern print, which furnishes ready facility for the correction of prevalent abuses. Let any congregation be enabled, and so induced to sing its own proper part in this arrangement of the Service, whether monotone or melody, let an efficient choir support and decorate with Tallis's counterpoint its performance, and the grand effect this must produce will be an example so attractive as to incite the emulation of whomever, wishing well, can distinguish well from ill.

(To be continued.)

WE once heard of a composer who declared that he would set the London Directory to music if he could only find a publisher for it. Such instances as this must, we imagine, be extremely rare, for we continually find ballad writers at a loss for what they usually call "words;" and we may accept this as a proof, therefore, that composers are desirous of wedding their music, if not to "immortal verse," at least to something which may pass current with intelligent listeners during the brief period of existence which such productions usually enjoy. With this laudable desire every real artist will cordially sympathize; but in the present day it must be clearly seen that in the endeavour to give a meaning to the songs especially intended (like the razors in Peter Pindar's tale) "to sell," there may be a real danger of merely using the music as a means of gilding a number of moral pills for family use. The composer in this case must inevitably sink beneath the poet; and the poetry never being of a remarkably high order, the dead level of mediocrity brought to bear upon the manufacture of this article is somewhat depressing to contemplate. As long, however, as music of this class depended upon its own intrinsic and unaided merit for a sale, there could be little chance of its affecting in the slightest degree the real world of art. Ladies might lisp out sentimental inanities in a drawing-room; and admiring listeners might be melted into a moral rectitude of conduct without music, in fact, having anything whatever to do in the matter; but when we find artists of even the highest class not only lending their names to grace the title-pages of these effusions, but actually singing them in public, to the exclusion of the perfect works of art which lie around them, it is time to protest against such a desecration of ability and power; and it is the duty of all interested in the progress of music to do so on every occasion that offers itself. There is a great deal of nonsense talked and written in the present day about music for the "domestic circle;" and in our late strictures upon "drawing-room music," we endeavoured to prove that no real difference exists between compositions suited for the drawing-room and those suited for a concert-room, save that difference which is obvious to all, viz., that certain works require large orchestral and choral resources, for which a small space is not suitable. If this title, therefore, be really invented to pass off flimsy productions which are merely intended for the music-market, it would be a satisfaction to art-lovers to think that in public, at least, they are safe from the infliction of listening to them. Music written for "home" should certainly stay there: like other home-made manufactures we could mention, they may be very apt to disagree with strangers; and cynical bachelors are always cautious even of purchasing anything labelled as a good "family article." We can have no possible objection to "old arm-chairs," or "family spectacles" being glorified in song: we may tolerate even stories of pretty girls' "secrets"— affect an interest in an unknown lady's "choice," and "bridal" — or even sympathize with the timid admirer who "will not ask to press that cheek;" but we must insist upon it that such compositions should be kept for family consumption, and not be introduced, by undue influence, into the public concert-room. Were the method adopted to force a sale for these productions a secret, we might hesitate to give it publicity; but it is thoroughly known; and all who support it must have fully prepared themselves for any hostile criticism which the system may provoke.

We remember the time when it was the boast that concerts were "patronised by Royalty;" now they are patronised by the "Royalty" system. A fixed sum is paid upon each copy sold to the vocalist who will push a composition by introducing it at every concert at which he or she is engaged, where the nature of the programme will not positively forbid it. The columns of the daily newspapers must have enlightened the public upon the manner in which this system is worked. "Miss —— will sing the successful new ballad, 'My Mother's voice,' at Greenwich on the 4th inst, at Croydon on the 8th, at Worcester on the 11th, at Hereford on the 14th," &c., &c. These are the advertisements that meet us every morning, signs indeed of the spread of music, but too indicative of trade influence to deceive even the most sanguine enthusiast in the art.

We have hitherto spoken of this system only as applied to vocal music; but so profitable a speculation can scarcely be supposed to stop here. Why should it not be applied to sacred music, for instance, so that congregations should be dosed *ad nauseam* with "Jenkins in F," or "Tomkins in A?" Might it not be an excellent investment to fee an organist, so that a publisher should be able to command his services as he pleases? Say a "Royalty" of fourpence a copy on a "Te Deum," and sixpence on an Anthem: Chants might perhaps be taken in quantities, and settled for periodically at so much a dozen; nay we do not see why the Voluntary should ever be a "Voluntary" at all: let it be, like the rest of the service, chosen by publishers, and paid for handsomely, so that those who dole out a paltry pittance to an organist as a salary, may calm their conscience by the reflection that it is made up to him in another way. Then what a profitable field for enterprise would be open to conductors of concerts. A graduated scale of fees for the performance of orchestral works might be easily drawn up, so that symphonies, overtures and concertos should be admitted at a fixed value. This would make it so remunerative to a conductor that he might well afford to offer his services to concert-givers for nothing. It may be said that audiences would not be satisfied with feeble and meaningless works, whilst the great compositions are equally within reach; but are not commonplaces rapidly supplanting the best works in vocal music at some of our well attended fashionable concerts; and why should not the same experiment be tried with compositions for the Orchestra? The "Royalty" system is based upon the imbecility of the public, and the result shows that there is still a large capital to trade upon.

There can be no question that, supposing artists to be ruled only by the desire of making as much money as they can by the exercise of their talent, the method we have here commented upon would be eagerly and extensively embraced by all who have sufficiently established themselves as favourites of the public to command good prices for the sale of their services; but we are Utopian enough to believe that the mere commercial principle is scarcely applicable to art; since it should never be forgotten how large an amount of responsibility rests upon those who lead the public mind, even in their moments of relaxation from the sterner duties of the world. Music has, within the last few years, been accepted as one of the intellectual necessities of the nation; and it would be sad indeed to reflect that the art should be degraded by those whose mission it should be to uphold it in all its dignity and power.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

THIS establishment opened on the 27th April, with Mozart's opera *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Verdi's *I Lombardi* suffered on its first representation from the substitution of Mr. Tom Hohler for Signor Mongini. We have already recorded our opinion as to the impossibility of accepting Mr. Hohler in first tenor parts at a lyrical theatre, where we have a right to expect the most finished artists; and see no reason to alter our verdict during the present season. At the fourth performance of *I Lombardi*, Signor Mongini made his appearance; and though his voice seemed somewhat weakened, in consequence of his recent indisposition, he sang well, and was received with the utmost favour. An event worth chronicling is the revival of Nicolai's charming opera *Falstaff*, in which Madlle. Titiens amply proves that she is as ready in comedy as in tragedy; and Herr Rokitansky gives a most admirable reading of the amorous knight, singing the music as only a vocalist gifted with such a ponderous bass voice can hope to do. The first appearance of Madlle. Christine Nillson is announced for the 4th instant.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

THE production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* has given Madlle. Adelina Patti an opportunity of appearing in one of her best parts, in which we need scarcely say she was received with the usual amount of enthusiasm. *Le Nozze di Figaro* has also been revived, and M. Petit, whose *début* as *Mephistopheles*, in Gounod's *Faust*, we mentioned in our last number, undertook the part of *Figaro*, a character for which, however, in spite of his artistic singing, his somewhat heavy manner by no means fits him. His "Non piu andrai" was the most effective of his solos; but even this requires more playful humour than M. Petit seems possessed of. No doubt the *Figaro* of Mozart's opera is not the *Figaro* of Rossini's opera; but in the scenes with *Cherubino*, and especially in the "Non piu andrai," which is especially sung to the page, a little banter is absolutely necessary to give due effect to the music. Signor Graziani was scarcely at home in the Count, but he gave the music like an artist as he always does, and was *encored* in his duet "Crudel perche finora," which he sang with Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, one of the very best *Susannas* in our memory. Madlle. Adelina Patti has been unfortunately indisposed, we presume, in consequence of the unusually cold season; and the production of *Don Giovanni* has been delayed. On the 4th instant, we understand, Verdi's new opera, *Don Carlos*, is to be performed for the first time in this country.

MR. JOSEPH BARNBY'S CHOIR.

THAT the engagement of a "professional chorus," selected at random from the members of two or three companies happening to be disengaged on a special evening, and assembled together to perform the highest class of music with one rehearsal, will be no longer tolerated is a fact which should be taken to heart by all concert-givers in the future. The organization of a distinct choir, meeting together at periodical intervals, under the direction of an able and accomplished musician, whose every faculty shall be directed towards the production of a pure and perfect tone, and whose *baton*, like the magician's wand, shall be able to direct and control the power he has himself raised, has given to choral music in this country an importance which, under the old system of engaging choristers at random for a single performance, could never be attained. That Mr. Joseph Barnby, whose choir appeared for the first time at St. James's Hall, on the 23rd ult., has earned for himself a high place in the estimation of all who really love vocal part-music was fully proved by the performance of a varied selection of sacred and secular compositions which was given at the first concert. In Mendelssohn's eight-part Psalm "Judge me, O God," the tone was one of real musical power in every department of the choir; and the points were all attacked with a vigour and precision scarcely, if ever, equalled in this country. The gradations of tone, too, were strictly in accordance with the character of the words, and never exaggerated to either extreme, with the desire of producing "effects," which, however they may lay hold of the uneducated sympathies of a portion of the audience, have nothing whatever to do with art. Bach's Motett, for double choir, "I wrestle and pray," is full of difficulties: not only were all these surmounted with infinite ease, however, but the whole work was sung with a religious fervour which is too often lost sight of in the mere desire to take the right notes. Here the male voices, which have so important a part throughout the composition, came out with a majesty of power scarcely to be expected in a choir which has not been formed more than three months. Several part-songs, given for the first time, were highly successful. Benedict's "Old May-day," an elegant composition, bids fair to become exceedingly popular, and was most enthusiastically *encored*. In this we should mention that the female voices were remarkable for energy and true intonation. Mr. Sullivan's "O hush thee, my babie," gave the choir an opportunity of showing that they could maintain "tone" even in the most *piano* passages, a true and powerful test of the manner in which they have been trained. This composition is well written and pleasing, and was vociferously *encored*. An extremely effective part-song, by Mr. J. B. Calkin, "My lady is so wondrous fair," was received with much applause, and also *encored*. Mr. Henry Smart's part-song "The Curfew," like all this composer's works is full of character. The fifth, commenced by the basses alone, and sustained throughout the first phrase of eight bars, is in perfect keeping with the subject. Miss Agnes Zimmermann's fairy part-song, "Come follow, follow me," is light and